



2008 MiRSA Request for Proposal

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to establish additional Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs). MiRSAs are employer driven, business and community partnerships, focused on addressing workforce issues in an industry sector. Total funding available for the 2008 MiRSA initiative is \$400,000. State funding must be used within the first two years of the MiRSA contract and cannot be carried over into the third year.

Completed applications **MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH, no later than 5 p.m., Thursday, March 13, 2008. Submit to:**

**Ms. Bonita Smith
Department of Labor & Economic Growth/Bureau of Workforce Programs
Victor Office Center
201 North Washington Square, 5th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48913**

Proposals must be:

- 12-point type, double-spaced, single sided, 8 ½ x 11, non-glossy paper.
- 20-page limit. Please be concise and direct.
- Submit the original along with five copies.
- Submit email of proposal to rsa@michigan.gov, with Proposal 2008 and Applicant Name in the subject line.
- No electronics (disks) copies, or faxes will be accepted.

Attachments not permitted other than Exhibits A and B, which are required by this RFP.

A Pre-Bid Workshop Webinar to provide more information regarding this RFP will be held on **Thursday, February 14, 2008, from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.** Information regarding this Webinar will be posted on the MiRSA website <http://www.michigan.gov/rsa>.

All questions and answers must be submitted in writing to rsa@michigan.gov. For any additional questions you may have after the Pre-Bid Workshop Webinar session on **February 14, 2008**, please send an email to rsa@michigan.gov **no later than February 22, 2008.** All questions, answers, and the Pre-Bid Workshop Webinar will be posted to the MiRSA Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/rsa> by **February 27, 2008.**

If any information requested in the application is missing or incomplete, the applications will not meet threshold criteria for consideration.

**Michigan Regional Skills Alliance (MiRSA)
2008 Application**

APPLICANT INFORMATION: Applicants can be any organization selected by the partners to submit the application on behalf of the MiRSA, and serve as the fiduciary responsible for proper use of state and federal funding sources.

New MiRSA: _____ Expansion of Existing MiRSA:_____

Funding Requested Amount:_____

Name of Applicant:_____

Address: _____ Phone:_____

Fax:_____ Email Address:_____

Contact Person: _____ Title:_____

Federal ID #: _____ MI Nonprofit #:_____

Applicant is: **Check all that apply**

- ☐ Nonprofit Organization (type):_____
- ☐ Private Enterprise
- ☐ Local Unit of Government
- ☐ Organized Labor
- ☐ Economic Development Agency
- ☐ Michigan Works! Agency/Workforce Board
- ☐ Post Secondary
- ☐ Business Association
- ☐ Other (specify):_____

Industry Focus of MiRSA:_____

Regional Area of MiRSA (counties covered):_____

Official Name of MiRSA:_____

FISCAL AGENT INFORMATION: The Applicant and Fiscal Agent may be the same entity. The Fiscal Agent will perform the administrative duties and functions related strictly to fiscal operations. The proposal must clearly demonstrate that the Fiscal Agent is qualified and capable of carrying out the responsibility.

Name of Fiscal Agent: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

CONVENER INFORMATION: The Convener is the champion and organizer of the MiRSA.
(See Requirement 6)

Name of Convener(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY: The authorized signatory is the authorized legal entity MiRSA representative that will sign the Grant Document with the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG) and who has full authority to enter into agreements on behalf of the MiRSA.

Signature

Title(s)

Print Name & Date

DEFINITION & PURPOSE

MiRSAs are locally managed partnerships formed to address workforce issues affecting firms operating in an industry in a distinct geographic area. Among the challenges, the MiRSAs set out to resolve are worker shortages, skill shortages, training mismatches, employee recruitment and retention, and organizational design. Key features of MiRSA's include:

- MiRSAs seek to resolve systemic and structural problems by working at a multi-firm, industry-based level. There is a “galvanizing” workforce issue that draws employers, as well as others to the table.
- MiRSAs are regional in nature and reflect the local labor markets. Participating firms draw on a regional labor pool of people who live and work in the region. (“Regional” refers to the geography of labor markets. At a minimum, a MiRSA's region cannot be smaller than a county.)
- Employers who participate in such alliances tend to see the business climate as friendly and supportive, an important consideration in location decisions.
- MiRSAs engage all appropriate public and private stakeholders in collaborative problem solving.
- These stakeholders are brought together by a **convener**; an individual or organization that is acting in part as an organizer but is also a partner with recognized expertise in the issue area.
- Industry sectors in which MiRSAs are formed are a significant part of the local economy, but they need not be the principal industry of the area.

The State of Michigan's objective for the MiRSA initiative is to assist local areas in developing industry-based partnerships that will promote the economic health and welfare of areas' businesses and workers. Michigan intends to stimulate and support the development of MiRSAs with the overall goal of providing Michigan employers with a highly skilled workforce, and Michigan citizens with careers with good wages and opportunity. Firms that continually upgrade the skills of their employees are more likely to remain competitive and healthy than those that do not. As industries in a region prosper, they tend to attract suppliers who benefit from the proximity to their customers and similar businesses that benefit from the availability of skilled workers.

- MiRSAs will focus on the needs of an industry cluster within a region and multiple employers in that industry;
- Conveners of the MiRSA will be key players in the community who have a role in solving the workforce needs in the industry, and a role in addressing the need for good jobs by community residents;
- MiRSAs will focus on the workers or potential workers of the industry and work to improve opportunities in the career ladder; and
- MiRSAs will achieve systemic changes in the industry and workforce that have mutually beneficial results for employers, workers, and the community.

Each MiRSA is expected to participate in:

- Learning Institutes
- Regional Forums
- Technical Assistance (site visits, webinars, surveys etc.)
- Service Mark Usage
- Evaluations

Successful MiRSA applicants must:

- Follow state reporting requirements
- Coordinate with the State regional planning initiatives

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Responses to each requirement should be concise. **Where applicable, bullet points may be used. If a proposal is being submitted to expand a currently designated MiRSA, it is required to meet the expansion requirements criteria provided on page 8 of the RFP.**

Requirement 1: Degree of Employer Involvement:

Applicants must define the universe of employers in the relevant regional sector and the specific firms that will be involved in the MiRSA. Application criteria will favor applicants that involve significant employers within the industry sector. Provide a description of employer involvement including:

- The process used to obtain employer input during the development of the application, and how the key employers within the industry were involved in its development.
- The depth of employer participation: A champion employer is one that has demonstrated involvement in addressing key workforce issues, and has an understanding of a regional approach –they know they are a part of a collaborative group and have a clear definition of what their role is. There is a “galvanizing” issue that draws employers, as well as, others to the table.

Requirement 2: MiRSA Connection with 21st Century Regional Planning and the No Worker Left Behind Initiatives (NWLBI):

In addition to employers, MiRSAs must include other principle stakeholders positioned to addressing the challenges facing the region and industry. Each partnership will be expected to include the appropriate partner organizations and their commitment to align with the State’s other workforce and training initiatives. The MiRSA application must demonstrate a commitment to align with 21st Century Regional Planning initiative and the NWLB training activities occurring in the region. Proposal must show the collaboration with education/training providers and other partners to leverage employer connections. Applicants must identify and list common partners they share with the 21st Century Regional Planning initiative and NWLB activities in their region. Partners must have a clear understanding/definition of what their role is.

Partners can include, but are not limited to:

- Education K-12
- Community Colleges
- Other Education (post secondary, private)
- Economic Development Groups
- Michigan Works Agencies (Workforce Investment Boards)
- Unions
- Trade Associations

- Faith Based Organizations (FBO)
- Community Based Organizations (CBO)
- Advocacy or Interest Groups
- Chambers
- Local & State Government

Requirement 3: Industry Focus

MiRSAs focus on the needs in a single industry and multiple employers in the industry. Applicants must describe why the specific industry sector is being targeted and outline broad goals and objectives for sector initiative (i.e. high growth jobs, declining sector to prevent further closings, upgrade incumbent worker skills, establish career pathways, establish industry skills standards). Explain how and why the geographic region was determined.

Requirement 4: Work Plan

The application must clearly articulate a problem or the “galvanizing” issue(s) that affects the regional industry, which the MiRSA will address. The problem statement must include how the MiRSA will address the training and placement needs of employers. The MiRSAs needs to be flexible in order to meet employers’ needs. This translates in the way that projects, mid-course adjustments, and response to changes, etc. are addressed. The applicant must demonstrate their commitment to align their goals and measures with the strategic planning of the 21st Century Regional Planning and No Worker Left Behind initiatives through collaboration with education/training providers to leverage employer connections. Complete the Work Plan Matrix, (Exhibit A) which identifies the tasks, steps and expected outcomes to be accomplished by the MiRSA and describe the following:

- The common elements between the 21st Century Regional Planning initiative and the application.
- How the MiRSA will coordinate with the NWLB training activities within the region. Priority will be given to MiRSAs that align training activities with high growth, high demand industries.
- How employers were involved in the development of goals, work plan and outcomes.
- How other partners were involved in the development of goals, work plan and outcomes.
- The process that will be used for mid-course adjustments, and how employers will be involved.
- How they plan to increase/engage new employers.
- How they plan to attract additional partners.
- Strategic planning is instrumental in the continued success of MiRSAs.
- Projected number of individuals to be trained and any individuals that will be placed.
- How will the MiRSA monitor progress towards goals and outcomes.

Requirement 5: Budget/Sustainability

It is expected that the MiRSA will exist for a minimum of three years. Grant funds are meant to jumpstart MiRSA development. Grants are for the first two years of the three-year period, and cannot be carried forward during the third year. Applicants must provide a three year budget that includes the funds requested from the State of Michigan through this grant application and any funds being leveraged by the partners. (Funds requested from the State of Michigan may be spread over years one (1) and two (2)). The Applicant must demonstrate a plan for sustainability. Submit the MiRSA Budget Form (Exhibit B) and provided a clear and concise sustainability plan that includes, but is not limited to:

- Fundraising activities,
- In-Kind/Cash match, and
- Funding opportunities (Examples: fee for service, foundations, trade organizations, etc.).

Requirement 6: Convener

The convener is a key player in the community with a role of solving workforce needs of the industry within the targeted region (evidenced in the overview and work plan). The convener adds value by adding expertise and a personal network that compliments that of employers. The proposal should show:

- Role of convener or organization in implementing work plan.
- Demonstrate sufficient staff support dedicated to the MiRSA.
- The convener must add value and be dedicated to the MiRSA.
- The convener has expertise recognized within the industry as well as has a well-developed personal network.

MiRSA Expansion Requirements (for existing MiRSAs):

The State of Michigan recognizes that employers may identify the need to expand the geographic region of an industry sector and/or broaden current MiRSA activities as employers identify other workforce issues that need to be addressed. Therefore, applications for a MiRSA expansion designations that are within the same industry sector and similar geographic region will be reviewed if:

- 1) The new MiRSA is proposing to merge with an existing MiRSA to:
 - a. Expand the industry base.
 - b. Expand services.
 - c. Expand the geographic region

Or

- 2) The existing MiRSA is expanding geographic region, expanding the industry base, or offering a broader scope of services.

Applicants must indicate within the proposal, which of the above expansion criteria apply.